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Agenda item 118

PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1990-1991

Activities of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

First report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

A. General

1. The major functions of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as defined by the General Assembly in its resolution 14 (I), section A, of 13 February 1946, are:

> "(a) To examine and report on the budget submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly;
>
> "(b) To advise the General Assembly concerning any administrative and budgetary matters referred to it;
>
> "(c) To examine on behalf of the General Assembly the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies and proposals for financial arrangements with such agencies;
>
> "(d) To consider and report to the General Assembly on the auditors' reports on the accounts of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies."

In addition, the Advisory Committee reports on administrative budgets and other matters to the governing bodies of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (voluntary funds), the United Nations Environment Programme (Environment Fund), the United Nations Habitat and

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Human Settlements Foundation, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the United Nations University, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

2. Under rule 156 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the members of the Advisory Committee, no two of whom shall be nationals of the same State, shall be selected on the basis of broad geographical representation, personal qualifications and experience.

3. The members of the Advisory Committee in alphabetical order are:

Mr. C.S.M. MSELLE (Chairman)

Mr. Lawrence O. C. AGUBUZU

Mr. Ahmad Fathi AL-MASRI

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA

Mr. Carlos CASAP

Mr. Even FONTAINE-ORTIZ

Mr. Yogesh K. GUPTA

Mr. John FOX

Mr. Tadanori INOMATA

Mr. Ulrich KALBITZER

Ms. Irmeli MUSTONEN

Mr. József TARDOS

Mr. Christopher R. THOMAS

Mr. Tjaco T. VAN DEN HOUT

Mr. Victor Aleksandrovich VISLYKH

Mr. YANG Hushan

4. The Advisory Committee met at Santiago from 9 to 13 April, in New York from 17 April to 25 May, at Geneva from 28 May to 8 June, and at Vienna from 11 to 15 June. The matters that were before the Committee in each of these locations are discussed below.

B. Meetings at Santiago

5. The main purpose of the Committee's visit to Santiago was to afford it an opportunity to see first hand the operations and activities of the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC), including most especially administrative and budgetary arrangements.

6. The Committee was brought up to date on the status of accommodation at Santiago. In keeping with the increased attention being paid to the administrative and budgetary aspects of extrabudgetary activities, the Advisory Committee received

extensive information on the extrabudgetary activities carried out by ECLAC. The Committee also inquired into arrangements now in place and contemplated for dealing with the question of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs.

C. Meetings in New York

7. In New York, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and with representatives of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and submitted two reports (DP/1990/55 and DP/1990/87) to the Governing Council at its thirty-seventh session (June 1990) dealing, respectively, with:

(a) UNFPA:

(i) Report of the Executive Director on proposed revisions to the Financial Regulations of UNFPA (DP/1990/86);

(ii) Report on the senior management structure of UNFPA and its implications for post classifications at headquarters (DP/1990/52);

(iii) Report on the criteria and procedures for the establishment of temporary and regular posts in the field and at headquarters and proposal on the conversion of existing local temporary posts in the field (DP/1990/53);

(b) UNDP:

(i) Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1990-1991 (DP/1990/65);

(ii) Trust Funds established by the Administrator in 1989 (DP/1990/68);

(iii) Agency Support Costs - Report of the Expert Group (DP/1990/9);

(iv) UNDP Financial Regulations (DP/1990/63).

8. The Advisory Committee also met with the Executive Director of UNITAR and his representatives to consider the 1990 budgetary proposals for the Institute, and issued its report thereon.

9. A meeting was held with representatives of the United Nations University to discuss revised financial regulations and the management of the Endowment Fund of the University.

10. The Advisory Committee also considered a number of reports related to peace-keeping. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/192, the Secretary-General reported to the Committee on the proposed establishment of a support account. The Committee agreed to the establishment of the account in 1990, with interim financing from the combination of resources already included in the approved peace-keeping budgets, specifically for overload posts. As for the method of financing to be used beginning 1991, the Committee requested additional

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information on a proposed formula which would identify and justify the cost to each operation. The information should be supplied to the Advisory Committee and to the General Assembly before the end of September 1990 so that the formula can be considered by the General Assembly. The Advisory Committee also was provided with the criteria which will govern proposals for the creation of additional posts for peace-keeping and related support activities to be financed from the support account. In this connection, the Advisory Committee requested the Secretary-General to establish new posts financed from the account only after having received the Committee's concurrence. The Committee also expressed its view that an appropriate mix of contractual arrangements should be maintained vis-à-vis the staff filling posts financed by the account, so as to continue to provide flexibility in the management of staff resources. Finally, the Committee stated its intention to recommend to the General Assembly an appropriate procedure for review of the account, in the context of its report on the method of financing to be applied from 1 January 1991.

11. The Advisory Committee also considered a report on the operations of the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG). The purpose of that report was threefold: to provide information on the financial performance of UNIIMOG for the period 1 October 1989 to 31 March 1990; to report on the status of the receipt of assessed contributions to the UNIIMOG Special Account for the period ending 31 March 1990 and to propose the distribution of credits to Member States, and to seek the Advisory Committee's concurrence as to the level of commitments to be authorized for the current six-month mandate period from 1 April to 30 September 1990.

12. With regard to the distribution of credits to Member States, General Assembly resolution 44/189 specified that $10 million of the unencumbered balance of UNIIMOG as at 30 September 1989 shall be credited to Member States against their assessments in respect of such mandate periods as might be approved by the Security Council for the 12 months subsequent to 31 March 1990. The Advisory Committee concurred in the Secretary-General's proposal to credit $5 million to Member States in respect of the mandate period 1 April to 30 September 1990, on the understanding that the remaining $5 million would be credited to Member States against the assessments in respect of the mandate period beginning 1 October 1990. The Advisory Committee also stated its intention to review the unencumbered balance of $13.7 million net as at 31 March 1990 (excluding the above-mentioned $10 million) in the context of its examination of the estimates for the next mandate period, in order to ascertain whether additional amounts can be credited to Member States.

13. With regard to the mandate period 1 April to 30 September 1990, the Secretary-General requested the concurrence of the Advisory Committee in the level of commitments in the amount of $38.4 million gross. That amount had been authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/189, subject to the concurrence of the Advisory Committee. After considering the supporting information, the Advisory Committee gave its concurrence to a level of commitments equivalent to the cost of maintaining UNIIMOG during the six-month period ending 31 March 1990, i.e. $29.8 million (gross). In so doing, the Advisory Committee indicated that, should the negotiations on the deployment of UNIIMOG-operated helicopters and the establishment of a naval unit be successfully completed, the

Committee would be prepared to consider an increased level of commitments, if so required.

14. Pursuant to the Advisory Committee's request in its report (A/44/875) endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/191, the Advisory Committee was provided with a report on the disposition of the property of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia upon the completion of its mandate; as previously proposed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/44/856), and approved by the General Assembly in resolution 44/191, the property would be placed in reserve for future use by other peace-keeping operations, transferred to specialized agencies establishing a presence in Namibia, or donated to the Government of Namibia. The Advisory Committee was provided with preliminary schedules of equipment to be disposed of in the above manner; final schedules will be provided in due course. Pursuant to the provisions of financial regulation 12.7, and in view of the size and complexity of the UNTAG operation, the Advisory Committee has requested the Board of Auditors to conduct a special audit of the UNTAG operations. The report of the Board will be submitted during the current session of the General Assembly.

15. The Advisory Committee also considered reports of the Secretary-General concerning the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA). These concerned the commitments entered into by the Secretary-General in respect of the enlarged mandate of the operation, which was authorized by the Security Council (resolution 650 (1990)) on a contingency basis, and in respect of the extension of that mandate through 29 June 1990 by the Security Council (resolution 656 (1990)).

16. The Advisory Committee considered a report on the financial performance of ONUCA for the period 7 November 1989 to 6 May 1990. The Committee gave its concurrence for commitments in the amount of $27,144,600 gross ($26,377,000 net) for the mandate period 7 May to 7 November 1990. The Secretary-General also proposed to credit Member States an amount of $8,000,000 against the net assessments for the mandate period 7 May to 7 November 1990, in view of the operation's unencumbered balance. In proposing that amount, the Secretary-General stated his intention to retain an amount of $1,989,800 net to provide for the possible non-payment of assessments in the mandate period. The Advisory Committee, however, indicated that Member States should be credited the entire $9,989,800 against this mandate period.

17. The Advisory Committee also considered a report of the Secretary-General concerning his efforts to encourage and facilitate the early realization of a comprehensive political settlement in Afghanistan, as called for in General Assembly resolution 44/15. Following consideration of that report, the Committee concurred in the Secretary-General's request to enter into commitments up to $1,482,400 with regard to his efforts to reach a comprehensive political settlement in Afghanistan. That amount relates to the cost of retaining, through December 1990, a limited number of military officers serving as military advisers to the Secretary-General's Personal Representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

18. Those advisers constitute a component of the office of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Pakistan, which, under the Personal Representative of the

Secretary-General, continues to pursue the Secretary-General's role in promoting a comprehensive political settlement in Afghanistan.

19. In concurring in the Secretary-General's request, the Advisory Committee stated its expectation that the Secretary-General would pursue his negotiations with the Governments concerned to obtain local staff, vehicles and accommodations of the office of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Pakistan and requested that it be kept informed of the outcome of those negotiations, and that any attendant savings which would result would be reflected in the first performance report on the programme budget for the 1990-1991 biennium.

20. With regard to the programme budget for 1988-1989, the Advisory Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General on transfer of credits among sections. The Advisory Committee also had before it the report of the Secretary-General on programme performance for 1988-1989 (A/45/218 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1). The comments of the Advisory Committee on this report will be submitted in the context of its report on medium-term plan.

21. The Advisory Committee considered a number of items relating to the 1990-1991 programme budget, one of which was the Secretary-General's report on work-load statistics and work-load standards at Headquarters, Geneva and Vienna (A/C.5/45/1). The Committee's observations on this matter will be submitted to the current session of the General Assembly.

22. The Advisory Committee also had before it a paper on the rental of conference space in Bangkok to accommodate the forty-sixth session of ESCAP in Bangkok, but outside of the headquarters premises of ESCAP in view of the current lack of conference facilities due to construction work. The Advisory Committee concurred in the Secretary-General's request to enter into commitments under the terms of General Assembly resolution 44/203 in an amount not to exceed $124,600, on the understanding that a request for an additional appropriation in this regard will not be forthcoming. The Advisory Committee also concurred in the Secretary-General's proposal for an arrangement under which the payment of a rental subsidy to internationally-recruited General Service staff at the secretariat of ESCWA will be continued in the current biennium but phased out by 30 June 1991; the related cost will be met from savings from within section 14 of the programme budget.

23. With regard to the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of an extrabudgetary D-2 post for the future secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the Committee felt that sufficient information was not provided in respect of, inter alia, actual size of the secretariat, the manner of operation of the secretariat in relation to existing United Nations established structures, and whether the financing of the secretariat can be sustained relative to the size of the trust fund. In the circumstances, the Advisory Committee requested that it be provided with a more complete report which would address the above-mentioned points.

24. The Advisory Committee considered two requests of the Secretary-General concerning the extension of the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Promotion of the United Nations Decade for Disabled

Persons. The Committee concurred in the extension of the contract of the Special Representative for the three-month period April-June 1990. With regard to the Secretary-General's subsequent proposal to further extend the contract of the Special Representative until the end of the United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons, i.e. through 1992, the Committee agreed to an extension through the end of December 1990, pending a review of the matter at its fall 1990 session.

25. On the basis of information provided to it, the Advisory Committee concurred in a request submitted on behalf of the Commissioner General of UNRWA for the establishment of a post of Co-ordinator of operations at the D-2 level to be financed from the Agency's own operational funds.

26. The Advisory Committee also discussed the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213 (A/45/226). The Advisory Committee's comments thereon will be submitted in the context of its observations on the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997.

27. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/235 C, which endorsed the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in its report A/37/675, the Advisory Committee considered a report from the Secretary-General on judgements issued by the United Nations Administrative Tribunal during 1989. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that in paragraph 8 of its report A/37/675, it recommended that an annual report on the work of the Tribunal be submitted to the Committee and that such report "could focus on those decisions of the Tribunal which would require significant modification of existing practice with regard to a particular regulation. The Committee could report to the Assembly on this annual report as it deemed necessary".

D. Meetings at Geneva and Vienna

28. While at Geneva and Vienna, the Advisory Committee met with the Directors-General of UNOG and UNOV respectively. In the context of the agenda item entitled "Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency" (IAEA), the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the specialized agencies and IAEA and discussed with them the administrative budgets of their respective organizations and other related matters.

29. The Committee also used the occasion to study the agencies' arrangements for dealing with the problem of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs. Relevant information concerning these matters will be included in the Committee's report on administrative and budgetary co-ordination between the United Nations, the specialized agencies and IAEA, which will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. The Committee also, in connection with its study on arrangements for dealing with the problem of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, met with representatives of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the Secretary of the International Narcotic Control Board.

30. The Committee also discussed with the agencies the JIU report "Budgeting in organizations of the United Nations system" as well as the question of future

support-cost arrangements; the Committee, as indicated in its report (DP/1990/87), intends to submit a report on the support-cost matter at the appropriate time.

31. While in Geneva, the Advisory Committee held a meeting with JIU, primarily to discuss the above-mentioned report. The Committee also met with the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva as well as with the heads of other units at Geneva such as UNHCR, UNCTAD and UNDRO. Subsequent to meeting with the Director of UNIDIR at Geneva, the Committee issued its report on the proposed 1991 budget to the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR. The Committee also had the opportunity to be briefed by the Co-ordinator of the United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programme relating to Afghanistan.

32. While in Geneva and Vienna, the Advisory Committee reviewed space requirements for both UNOG and UNOV.

33. When meeting with representatives of IAEA, UNIDO and UNOV in Vienna, the Advisory Committee also raised the question of joint and common services, in particular, the matter of unified conference services. The Committee, in its fifth report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session 1/ had previously recommended that the Secretary-General submit a report to the General Assembly by the forty-fifth session on the outcome of his consultations with the parties concerned on the establishment of unified Conference Services at Vienna. The Committee's observations on the matter will be submitted in the context of its review of the Secretary-General's report.

34. In chapter I of its first report on the proposed programme budget for 1990-1991, 2/ the Advisory Committee discussed the question of extrabudgetary funds and noted, inter alia, that the disbursement of some funds is not subject to the scrutiny and control of any intergovernmental body. In its subsequent report to the General Assembly on extrabudgetary resources, 3/ the Advisory Committee stated its intention to look into the matter of arrangements for the administrative and budgetary review of the larger extrabudgetary funds and programmes such as the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and UNRWA. Accordingly, while in Vienna, the Committee took the opportunity to meet with officials of these programmes to discuss this matter. The Committee's observations on this matter will be submitted to the General Assembly at its current session at the same time it submits its observations on the Secretary-General's report on progress achieved in addressing problems related to the extrabudgetary side of United Nations expenditure.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 7A (A/44/7/Add.1-8), document A/44/7/Add.4.

2/ Ibid., Supplement No. 7 (A/44/7).

3/ Ibid., Supplement No. 7A (A/44/7/Add.1-8), document A/44/7/Add.7.

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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1990-1991

Work-load standards for various categories of conference-servicing staff, including clerical and typing staff, and work-load statistics for the various conference services in the 1986-1987 and 1988-1989 bienniums

Second report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on work-load standards for various categories of conference-servicing staff, including clerical and typing staff, and work-load statistics for the various conference services in the 1986-1987 and 1988-1989 bienniums (A/C.5/45/1). The report was prepared in response to recommendations of the Advisory Committee in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989 1/ and its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 2/ as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/201 B of 21 December 1989, section XVI.

2. Section I of the Secretary-General's report provides work-load standards for seven categories of conference-servicing staff, including clerical and typing staff, as follows: in the area of documentation, standards are provided for (a) typing (paras. 7-11), (b) translation (paras. 12-19) and (c) reproduction (paras. 20-24); and in the area of meeting services, standards are provided for (a) interpretation (paras. 25-27), (b) précis-writing (paras. 28-30), (c) verbatim reporting (paras. 31-33) and (d) supporting staff (paras. 34 and 35). In section II of the report the Secretary-General provides work-load statistics for the various conference services in the bienniums 1986-1987 and 1988-1989 (paras. 36-43) and also indicates the impact of work-load statistics on the level of conference resources (paras. 44-52).

3. The Advisory Committee notes the Secretary-General's statement (para. 8) that the establishment of word-processing has significantly increased the productivity of typists. The Advisory Committee also notes that the present work-load standards

were established before the introduction of word-processing in that area. As indicated in paragraph 10 of the report, the Secretary-General has proposed a net increase of 25 per cent to the existing standards. The Advisory Committee takes note of the problems outlined by the Secretary-General in paragraph 9 of his report that might affect increased productivity. In the view of the Committee those are not insurmountable and the Committee believes that, as the Secretariat gains more experience in the use of advanced technology, the work-load standards proposed by the Secretary-General could be revised further. Upon inquiry the Advisory Committee was informed that the new standards did not result from a detailed scientific examination of requirements but are more a rule of thumb. Consequently, the Advisory Committee recommends that, for the present time, work-load standards should be increased by 30 per cent, from 3,300 to 4,290 words per day of original language text and from 1,650 to 2,145 words per day of final translated text.

4. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as a result of the introduction of word-processors and a common word-processing software package on a Secretariat-wide basis, author departments were currently in a position to submit documents to the Department of Conference Services in electronic form, which would result eventually in greater productivity for the Department. However, representatives of the Secretary-General indicated that the introduction of new technology would not improve the quality of the contents of documents that were submitted to the Department. In the view of the Advisory Committee there are two areas that must be addressed. First, the Advisory Committee understands that informal guidelines or presentational standards exist regarding the transmission of documents from author departments to the Department of Conference Services. The Advisory Committee recommends that formal technical standards should be established and that steps should be taken to ensure that those standards are strictly enforced. Second, with regard to the substantive or editorial quality of the documents, the Advisory Committee recommends that efforts should be made to upgrade the drafting and editorial abilities of the Secretariat as a whole, inter alia, through the expansion of efforts by the Training Service in this area.

5. With regard to translation (paras. 12-19), the Committee notes that the present standards do not incorporate the element of self-revision and that the Secretary-General is now proposing new standards that incorporate this aspect of the work. The Advisory Committee also recalls the statement by the Secretary-General in paragraph 15 of his report that the Department of Conference Services "intended to aim at an eventual target for self-revision of up to 45 per cent of the translation work-load". The Committee notes, however, that the Secretary-General is proposing a revision of 40 per cent. The reasons for this were not fully convincing to the Advisory Committee. In the view of the Committee, technological advances and further efforts employed in the training of translators should result in more work that would be subject to self-revision. The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the target of 45 per cent should be maintained. If that target were applied to a notional translation job of 150 standard final pages (49,500 words) the following would result:

	Current standards (work-days)	Revised standards (work-days) 40 per cent self-revision	Revised standards (work-days) 45 per cent self-revision
Translators	30.0	18.0	16.5
Self-revisers	-	14.1	15.8
Revisers	10.0	6.0	5.5
	40.0	38.1	37.8

6. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's report that no standards currently exist for reproduction. The Committee also notes that the Secretary-General's proposals contained in paragraphs 21 to 24 are experimental. In this connection the Committee was also informed that those standards were not reached through an exhaustive study. In the view of the Committee, reproduction is affected not only by the quality of staff services but also by the use of modern efficient equipment. The Advisory Committee notes the difference between the standards applied at Headquarters and at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Committee understands that that is largely due to the different configurations of equipment at the two centres. That being the case, the Advisory Committee recommends that the figure of 20,000-page impressions should serve as a starting point for Geneva, rather than the 15,000 proposed by the Secretary-General.

7. With respect to interpretation (paras. 25-27), précis-writing (paras. 28-30), verbatim reporting (paras. 31 and 32) and supporting staff (paras. 34 and 35), no changes are proposed to the work-load standards that currently exist. The Advisory Committee examined the areas of interpretation, précis-writing and verbatim reporting in the context of the requirements of temporary versus permanent staff. The information given to the Committee in that regard was not conclusive and the Committee intends to continue examining the cost-effectiveness of using temporary as opposed to permanent staff in the context of its examination of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

8. Section II of the report contains information related to work-load statistics for the various conference services in the biennium 1986-1987 and 1988-1989. The Committee notes that this information has been provided in response to its request. 3/ The Committee continues to be dissatisfied with the situation in Vienna and intends to pursue that question in the context of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

9. For comparative purposes the Advisory Committee requested the specialized agencies to provide information concerning work-load standards for their conference-servicing staff.

10. According to information provided by the International Monetary Fund, there are no official work standards for language service staff. Translators and revisers are expected to produce an average of not less than 1,500 and 3,000 words per day, respectively. There are no guidelines for typists, proof-readers and interpreters.

11. The World Health Organization (WHO) indicated that translators are expected to produce the following number of standard pages per working day: translation (5 pages), revision (10 pages), editing (30 pages), proof-reading (30 pages), proof-reading of publications (50 pages), and proof-reading of official records (100 pages). On the average revisers produce 15 pages per day, typists 5,500 words per day. With respect to interpretation, WHO, as well as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) apply the work-load standards for interpreters as defined by the Agreement concluded between the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) and the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC). That agreement establishes the maximum work-load for free-lance interpreters as two meetings a day and states that an interpreter should not be called upon to work for more than 8 meetings a week. "Meeting" means a total period of two and one half to a maximum of three hours from the time the interpreter is required to be on duty.

12. The Advisory Committee also understands that, with respect to translators, revisers, editors and précis-writers, a number of agencies and offices apply the work-load standards defined by the Agreement between the CCAQ and the Association Internationale des Traducteurs de Conférence (AITC). However, this agreement applies only to short-term employment in the above-mentioned categories.

13. ILO indicated that translators produce an average of 1,750 words per person per day, while revisers produce 3,500 words per person per day.

14. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) standards for interpretation are eight sessions a week composed of a maximum of two three-hour sessions per day. For précis-writing ITU has specific standards depending on the level of the staff member and the length of the meeting. For translators, ITU averages between 4,000 and 7,500 words per person per day depending on the language; for revision, the average is between 8,000 and 18,000 words per person per day. For revision and proof-reading the average is 60 pages per day. With regard to reproduction, the ITU workshops are equipped to produce a maximum of 95 million pages a year.

15. UNESCO has standards of production for translators ranging from three and one half pages to six pages per person per day depending on the language. For typing, UNESCO requires 4 to 11 pages per person per day after composition, layout and re-reading.

16. FAO indicates that average production in composition typing pools is 5,500 words per person per day and 3,500 words per person per day in audio-typing pools. For translator/revisers, FAO has used 1,800 words per day as the standard production to determine the 1990 key unit costs. For reproduction, an average of 14,425 pages per day has been used. For verbatim reporting FAO hires people to service two meetings per day, which should not exceed six hours in duration.

17. UPU uses standards of 1,875 words per person per day for translation, 4,500 words per day for revisers and 3,000 words per day for typing. There are no standards for reproduction.

18. The Advisory Committee points out that work-load standards are intended to be indicators of general applicability that can be used as a basis for a standardized approach to the calculation of conference-servicing costs. However, as indicated above, except for interpretation, for which there exists an agreement that is generally applied by a number of the agencies, there are no unified work-load standards for conference-servicing staff in the United Nations system. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretariat, in the context of the appropriate inter-agency consultations, should explore the possibilities of introducing uniform standards wherever possible in those areas which are not currently covered. The Advisory Committee requests the Secretary-General to report to it on progress achieved in this regard.

19. Subject to its observations in paragraphs 3, 5, 6 and 18 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the work-load standards as indicated in the annex to the present report.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/42/7), para. 29.18.

2/ Ibid., Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/44/7), para. 29.22.

3/ Ibid., paras, 29.18-29.21.

ANNEX

Standard requirements for conference services costs

1. Documentation (pre-session, in-session and post-session)

(a)	Translation:	1 work-day for every 1,650 words
(b)	Revision:	1 work-day for every 4,950 words
(c)	Self-revision:	1 work-day for every 1,400 words
(d)	Typing:	1 work-day for every 4,290 words of original language text
		1 work-day for every 2,145 words of final translated text
(e)	Reproduction and distribution:	

The standard roll figure for each language used for costing purposes for Headquarters meetings is as follows:

	Arabic	Chinese	English	French	Russian	Spanish
Pre-session, post-session and in-session documentation	600	200	4 200	1 500	500	750

2. Meeting services

(a)	Interpretation:	1.5 work-days per meeting (of 2.5 to 3.0 hours' duration) per language for English, French, Russian and Spanish; 2 work-days per meeting per language for Arabic and Chinese
(b)	Supporting staff:	
	Conference officer:	1 work-day for a meeting of 50 or more participants; 0.5 work-day for a meeting of less than 50 participants
	Documentation distribution clerk:	0.5 work-day per meeting

3. Summary records

(a) Précis-writing/translation: 3 work-days of précis-writing per meeting; 2 work-days of translation per language per meeting

(b) Revision: 0.5 work-day per language per meeting

(c) Reproduction and distribution:

The standard roll figures used for summary records of Headquarters meetings are as follows:

Arabic	Chinese	English	French	Russian	Spanish
550	200	3 500	1 500	400	650

For costing purposes in calculating page impressions, it is assumed that each summary record will consist of 15 pages of printed text.

4. Verbatim records

(a) Verbatim reporting: 4 work-days per meeting per language

(b) Verbatim revision: 1 work-day per meeting per language

(c) Reproduction and distribution:

The standard roll figures used for verbatim records of Headquarters meetings are as follows:

Arabic	Chinese	English	French	Russian	Spanish
500	200	3 400	1 000	400	500

For costing purposes, in calculating page impressions, it is assumed that each verbatin record will consist of 30 pages of printed text.

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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1990-1991

Revised estimates under sections 3, 13, 27 and 31 and income section 1

Third report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on revised budget estimates under sections 3 (Political affairs, trusteeship and decolonization), 13 (Economic Commission for Africa), 27 (Public information) and 31 (Staff assessment) and income section 1 (Income from staff assessment) of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 (A/C.5/45/2).

I. PHASING OUT OF ACTIVITIES UNDER SECTION 3C (NAMIBIA)

2. The Advisory Committee recalls that, pending the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) on the independence plan for Namibia, the General Assembly approved the provisional estimates under section 3C (Namibia) of the programme budget.

3. The Advisory Committee further recalls that following the independence of Namibia on 21 March 1990, the General Assembly, in its resolution 44/243 A, dissolved the United Nations Council for Namibia and approved the continued implementation of a limited programme of activities for the biennium 1990-1991. The Committee notes that the revised estimates take into account the impact of the independence of Namibia and the implications of General Assembly resolution 44/243 A. The revised estimates are based on the assumption that a major component of the related activities will be completed by the end of 1990, with residual programmes to be delivered in the period 1991-1994.

United Nations Council for Namibia

4. As indicated in table 3C.1 of the report, a revised amount of $919,300 is estimated for the biennium 1990-1991 for the United Nations Council for Namibia. Included in this total is an amount of $241,800 for the cost of organizing a seminar on programme planning for the national reconstruction and development of Namibia, subject to the agreement by the Government of Namibia (A/C.5/45/2, para. 20). In response to inquiry, the representative of the Secretary-General indicated that it was unlikely that the seminar would be held later in 1990 since the Government of Namibia had not yet responded to the Council's proposal. The Advisory Committee further notes that at the Donor Pledging Conference on Namibia, held on 21 and 22 June 1990, the matter of the national reconstruction and development of Namibia had already been discussed. Under the circumstances, the Committee recommends that the estimate of $241,800 should be deleted at this time. Should the Government of Namibia express interest in holding the seminar, the Secretary-General should indicate the related requirements in his performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

Office of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia

5. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 34 of the report that it is the Secretary-General's intention to make every effort to implement the General Assembly's request in paragraph 7 of resolution 44/243 A to redeploy the staff of the Commissioner's Office as a matter of priority. However, the Committee notes that a provision of $1,634,900 has been proposed under section 3C for salary and common staff costs of the 28 staff members of the Commissioner's Office awaiting placement.

6. The Advisory Committee was informed that with the winding down of activities in the Commissioner's Office at Headquarters, Lusaka, Gaborone and Luanda, the majority of the 61 total posts have already been vacated and placement would have to be found for 28 staff members located at Headquarters, namely, one D-2, five P-5, two P-4, six P-3, two P-2 and 12 General Service posts.

7. In response to further inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that some of the remaining 28 staff members had already been placed elsewhere in the Secretariat or would be redeployed shortly. The Advisory Committee believes that in view of the high turnover of staff, the average rate of external recruitment at all levels, the number of present and foreseeable vacancies and the urgent need for additional staff at some other offices, in particular for peace-keeping activities and at regional commissions, it should not be too difficult to place the remaining staff of the Commissioner's Office by the end of 1990. The Committee therefore recommends that the Secretary-General should be requested, in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 44/243 A, to make all efforts to redeploy those staff members by the end of 1990. In this connection the Advisory Committee recalls the provisions of staff regulation 1.2, according to which staff members are subject to the authority of the Secretary-General and to assignment by him to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations. The Advisory Committee therefore concludes that the provision for salary and common staff costs for 28 staff members for 1991 cannot be justified and recommends that the amount of $1,634,900 should be deleted from the revised estimate for the biennium 1990-1991.

8. With regard to the preparation of a comprehensive national census for Namibia, the Committee notes from paragraph 32 of the Secretary-General's report that the Government of Namibia has not yet made such a request and that no provision has yet been made for assistance.

9. In this connection, the Advisory Committee believes that the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is better equipped to carry out the census. The Committee was informed that UNFPA was already in contact with the Government of Namibia. The Committee therefore recommends that if the Secretary-General receives such a request from the Government of Namibia, UNFPA should be requested to carry out a national census in Namibia and that, if possible, it be financed from outside the regular budget.

United Nations grants

10. Grants are discussed in paragraphs 41 to 43 of the report. As indicated in paragraph 43, of the $3 million provisionally appropriated under this heading the estimated subvention from the regular budget is $2.9 million. Of that amount, $1.5 million for 1990 has already been credited to the United Nations Fund for Namibia. It is proposed to make the remaining $1.4 million available to meet the possible residual obligations of the Institute for Namibia, which were referred to in the statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/44/56/Rev.1) relating to the draft resolution later adopted as General Assembly resolution 44/243 B.

11. As explained in that statement, reported weaknesses in the Institute's financial accounting made it difficult to determine the full extent of its financial problems; current estimates indicate that the Institute's budget for 1990 of $5,300,800, approved by the Senate, exceeds income for 1990 and cash resources carried forward from 1989 by approximately $1.4 million. The Advisory Committee is very concerned over the apparent lack of proper financial control and management of the Institute, which resulted in such a high deficit despite the early closure of the Institute on 30 September 1990 and the substantial reduction of related programme activities.

12. The Advisory Committee notes that the amount of up to $1.4 million now foreseen to meet the deficit of the Institute was originally intended to be available for assistance and scholarships to Namibians under special projects under the Nationhood Programme for Namibia, as indicated in annex III of the report, and not for the liquidation of the Institute. In response to inquiry, the Committee was informed that the $1.5 million already credited to the fund (see para. 10 above) had been spent in 1990 primarily for scholarships of Namibians and that there would be further needs in 1991 and beyond to complete those scholarships. To that effect, the Trust Committee for the United Nations Fund for Namibia will seek additional funds in 1991 to implement those activities.

13. In this regard, the Advisory Committee notes the statement in paragraph 43 of the Secretary-General's report that the necessary additional amounts will be "financed solely from voluntary contributions and will not entail additional subventions under the regular budget in 1990-1991". The Advisory Committee was

informed that the Secretary-General intends to launch an appeal in early 1991 for voluntary contributions to the United Nations Fund for Namibia to provide the necessary assistance to Namibian students.

Transitional Unit for Namibia

14. In paragraphs 53 to 58 of the Secretary-General's report it is proposed to establish a Transitional Unit for Namibia in the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Co-operation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, composed of one D-1, two P-3, one General Service (Principal level) and four General Service (Other level) posts. The Unit would assure the orderly completion of all programmes and activities currently financed from the Fund for Namibia and provide services to the Trust Committee for the Fund. The Advisory Committee was informed that, at this point, it is planned to maintain the Unit until 1994. Considering that the majority of training and education projects listed in annex III to the Secretary-General's report are decreasing every year and a large number will be completed during 1991, services to the Trust Committee for the Fund would also be decreasing considerably from 1990 to 1994. The Committee is therefore of the view that the number of staff proposed for the Transitional Unit for four years, i.e. three Professionals, including one D-1, and five General Service staff members, is not justified. Furthermore, such a unit is normally headed by a P-5. The Committee therefore recommends that a small unit of one P-5 and two other level General Service posts be approved and that the estimates be reduced by $283,000.

15. The Advisory Committee was informed that 23 projects under the Nationhood Programme for Namibia have been inactive for more than one year and that the executive agencies or offices have been requested to prepare terminal budgets for those projects and to return the unutilized balances to the Nationhood Programme Account. The Committee noted that of the 11 remaining projects under the Nationhood Programme, 4 projects are about to be closed, 3 projects are being continued for about five students each and no specific information has been provided on the remaining 4 projects. Of the 7 projects under the General Account, 1 project planned until 1992 is apparently not to be carried out, 3 projects are to be closed, 1 project scheduled until 1993 provides training to one student, the fellowship programme provides assistance to 25 fellows of the Institute, and the assistance project to the Namibia Secondary Technical School at Loudima, Congo, is subject to further review by the Governing Board and negotiations with the Government of Namibia.

II. SECTION 3B. DEPARTMENT FOR SPECIAL POLITICAL QUESTIONS, REGIONAL CO-OPERATION, DECOLONIZATION AND TRUSTEESHIP

16. The activities of the Department carried out under subprogramme 2 (Special programmes of economic assistance) of programme 2 (Special political questions), co-ordinated by the Unit for Special Emergency Programmes of the Department, are indicated in paragraphs 65 to 68 and tables 3B.1 and 3B.2 of the Secretary-General's report. The Secretary-General proposes to redeploy from Programme support services an established P-4 post and an established General Service (Other level) post to the Unit for Special Emergency Programmes under the

programme "Political affairs". The Committee is of the view that some of the functions of the Unit may fall within the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other agencies providing emergency relief that are better equipped to mobilize and provide international assistance. The Committee therefore recommends that the functions of the Unit should be reviewed.

17. The Committee recalls that the P-4 post and General Service post in the Programme support services have become redundant following the phasing out of the activities relating to Namibia after its independence and therefore are due for abolition. The Committee points out that the activities of the Trusteeship Council and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples have been decreasing for a number of years. The Committee does not support the redeployment of one redundant P-4 post and one General Service (Other level) post to the Unit for Special Emergency Programmes and recommends that those posts should be abolished, together with the second General Service (Other level) post, resulting in a further deduction of $123,600 from the programme budget for 1990-1991.

III. SECTION 3D. CENTRE AGAINST APARTHEID

18. In paragraphs 69 to 78 and tables 3D.1 and 3D.2 of the report, the Secretary-General is requesting the establishment of two new P-3 posts and one General Service (Other level) post in the Centre. The Secretary-General is also requesting the upgrading of one existing P-3 post to the P-4 level and two existing P-4 posts to the P-5 level. The representative of the Centre against Apartheid noted that a P-3 post would be required to provide support to the recently established Commission against Apartheid in Sports. Another P-3 post and a General Service post are being requested to provide more administrative backstopping to the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in implementing the scholarship programme under the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

19. The Advisory Committee was informed that the Commission against Apartheid in Sports is at present being serviced by a Secretary at the P-5 level and believes that an additional P-3 post for this activity is not justified. The Committee is also not convinced of the need to provide another P-3 post and a General Service post to the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development since there is no indication that the number of scholarships has increased. The Committee notes that the need for more effective administration of the scholarship programme does not necessarily imply the need for more administrative staff but rather to streamline the procedures in a more cost-effective management.

20. The Centre is also requesting the upgrading of the post of Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General of the Centre against Apartheid and of the post of Economic Affairs Officer in the Committee Services and Research Branch from the P-4 to the P-5 level and the upgrading of a P-3 post to the P-4 level in the Publicity, Assistance and Promotion of International Action Branch.

21. The Committee believes that the request for the upgrading of the three posts cannot be justified on the basis of significant additional responsibilities during 1990 and that it would not necessarily result in more expertise and productivity of the Centre. The Committee stresses that proposed reclassification of posts should not be discussed in the course of a current budget programme and should only be requested in a new budget proposal.

22. Taking into account its comments in paragraphs 18 to 21 above, the Advisory Committee therefore recommends against the proposed establishment of two additional P-3 posts and one General Service (Other level) post and the upgrading of one P-3 post and two P-4 posts to the P-4 and P-5 levels respectively, resulting in a further deduction of $219,400 under section 3D of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

IV. SECTION 27. PUBLIC INFORMATION

23. The Advisory Committee notes that the Department of Public Information has commenced or is planning some activities that are to be completed by the end of 1990 or in early 1991 and are estimated at $136,000. In particular the Committee was informed that arrangements for organizing briefings to be held from 8 to 18 October 1990 for non-governmental organizations, the media and business community at Bonn, Germany, Gothenburg, Sweden, and Helsinki have been completed and funds earmarked for this activity are fully obligated. The Committee believes that the timely implementation of an information programme is essential for it to have an impact and that the planned activities on Namibia 6 to 12 months after its independence appear not to be justified.

24. For this reason the Committee has difficulty recognizing the effectiveness of holding briefings in December 1990 or early 1991 for non-governmental organizations, the media and business community at Toronto, Ottawa and Tokyo over nine months after Namibia's independence as a follow-up to the journalists' tour to Namibia. The Committee believes that such briefings should have taken place at the time of Namibia's independence or shortly after the journalists' tour and that it does not effectively serve its purpose to conduct them at the end of 1990 or in early 1991. The Committee therefore recommends that the estimated funds of $37,000 should not be approved, taking into account that no funds have been obligated for this purpose.

25. In recommendation 2 (h) of section II of resolution 44/50 of 8 December 1989, the General Assembly called upon the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department of Public Information make plans for the establishment of an information centre in Namibia in consultation with the Government of Namibia immediately after independence. The Advisory Committee was informed by the Department that to date no formal request had been submitted by the Government of Namibia. However, it is the Department's understanding that such a request is likely to be made during the course of the current session of the Assembly. The Committee was further informed that discussions had taken place between representatives of the Department and senior officials of the Government of Namibia who expressed interest in co-operating with the United Nations on information matters, including the question

of opening an information centre at Windhoek. The Committee concurs with the Secretary-General's plan to redeploy part of the projected savings under section 27 towards the cost estimated at $259,700 (net of staff assessment) for establishing an information centre at Windhoek in 1991 as proposed in paragraphs 85 and 86 of the Secretary-General's report. The Committee trusts that the negotiations with the Government of Namibia on this matter will be completed shortly with a view to establishing the information centre.

V. SECTION 13. ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

26. The Advisory Committee notes that the review of the level of office automation at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in late 1989 revealed unusually severe operating restrictions on ECA due to outdated technical facilities, in particular the lack of modern computer technology for servicing its activities. The Committee was informed that, with the assistance of automation experts, the working conditions at ECA had been thoroughly assessed by qualified Headquarters staff specialized in modern technology. The evaluation of the administrative structure and working environment of ECA clearly showed that its ability to fulfil its mandate was greatly hampered by the technical backwardness of its facilities.

27. The Advisory Committee concurs with the Secretary-General that urgent action needs to be taken to establish adequate standards of technology and management to ensure the efficient functioning of the Commission. The Committee further notes that the Economic and Social Council also reviewed and took note of resolution 682 (XXV) of the Council of Ministers of the Commission entitled "Improving technical facilities of the Economic Commission for Africa".

28. The Committee has no objection to the estimated costs of $2,898,000 for the project consisting of (a) hardware and installation costs at $2,293,700, (b) software costs at $149,000, (c) a staff training programme and travel costs at $350,300, and (d) maintenance costs for 1991 only at $105,000.

29. The Committee observes that the project would encompass all activities of the Commission and that its financing would therefore include an amount of $500,000 from extrabudgetary resources. As proposed by the Secretary-General in paragraph 104 of his report, the net additional costs of the project under the regular budget, taking into account resources already available under section 13, are estimated at $1,716,500. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of an additional appropriation of $1,716,500 for the biennium 1990-1991 under section 13.

VI. RECAPITULATION

30. The Advisory Committee's recommendations in paragraphs 4 to 29 above on the revised estimates under sections 3, 13, 27, and 31 and income section 1 result in an additional decrease of $2,539,700 and thereby in a total decrease of $10,632,900 under the programme budget for 1990-1991 as follows:

Section of the programme budget	1990-1991 initial appropriations	Increase (decrease)	1990-1991 revised estimates proposed by the Secretary-General	Additional increases (decreases) recommended by the Advisory Committee	1990-1991 revised estimates recommended by the Advisory Committee
		(In thousands of United States dollars)			
3	35 988.2	(9 700.7)	26 287.5	(2 502.7)	23 784.8
13	57 725.7	1 716.5	59 442.2	-	59 442.2
27	87 225.4	(109.0)	87 116.4	(37.0)	87 079.4
TOTAL	180 939.3	(8 093.2)	172 846.1	(2 539.7)	170 306.4

31. In addition, the effect of the Advisory Committee's recommendations would be a further reduction under section 31 by an amount of $562,000 to be offset by an equal amount under income section 1.